Amending MMDR Act and MCR

†3092. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act, 1957 and the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 of the States for immediate and time-bound development of mineral-resources available in the States;

(b) if so, the proposed rules and sections;

(c) whether Government propose to devolve all the power pertaining to minerals mentioned in part 'a' and 'c' of the MMDR Act; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) There is no proposal to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 and Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 at present.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, do not arise.

Expansion of definition of 'minority communities'

3093. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to expand the definition of 'Minority Communities' to bring various linguistic and religious groups under its purview; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R.ANTULAY): (a) No such decision has been taken.

(b) Does not arise.

Utilization of Solar Energy

3094. SHRI LALIT SURI:
SHRIMATI SYEDAANWARATAIMUR:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to put in solar water heating/solar

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

power systems mandatory for every upcoming house/apartment and Government office;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) in what way Government are planning to motivate urban/rural areas to utilize solar energy; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Urban Development have requested the State/ Union Territory Governments to consider issuing suitable directives to the local bodies under their control for modifying the building bye-laws with a view to make the installation of solar water heating systems mandatory in certain categories of buildings. In order to assist the local bodies in this respect, a model regulation/bye-laws has also been circulated to all State and Union Territory Governments. The model regulation/bye-laws, when incorporated by the local bodies in their existing building bye-laws, will make it mandatory for those categories of buildings to have solar assisted water heating systems.

The Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh have so far issued necessary orders to urban local bodies to make solar water heaters mandatory in functional buildings in their States.

As regards solar power systems, there is no such plan at present as the cost of electricity generation from solar systems is quite high as compared to conventional electricity.

(c) and (d) Various steps taken by the Government to popularize the utilization of solar energy systems and devices include financial assistance through capital subsidy or interest subsidy, depending on the type of system and end-use application; upgradation of technology to reduce cost, improve efficiency and reliability; promotional support measures and policies by State Governments and their Agencies to accelerate deployment; setting up of Akshay Urja Shops in various districts for sale and service of renewable energy products, including solar energy systems and devices; support to training programmes; and organization of seminars/symposia and, publicity and awareness compaign through media.